

[26th February, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

Status Report on Progress of Electors Photo Identity Cards

Sl. No.	States/UT	Position as on	Total electors	Electors issued with Defect-free Identity Cards up to July, 2000	Electors issued with Defect-free Identity Cards after July 2000.	Total EPIC issue so far (Col. 4 + Col. 5)	Percent-age (Col. 6 as % of Col. 3)
1.	Kerala	31.1.2001	22,848,899	15,327,431	1,922,258	17,294,195	75.69
2.	Tamil Nadu	1.1.2001	47,945,872	26,581,419	4,213,115	30,796,895	64.23
3.	West Bengal	1.1.2001	48,642,245	37,673,926	2,155,974	39,829,900	81.88
4.	Pondicherry	31.10.2000	658,927	555,675	—	—	84.33

*Note: EPIC programme in Pondicherry is to commence after the current round of Special revision of Electoral Rolls.

Implementation of First National Judicial Pay Commission

452. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether All India Judges Association has urged Government to implement the First National Judicial Pay Commission Report which had suggested uniform pay structure, service conditions and nomenclature of posts for judicial officers; and

(b) Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The First National Judicial Pay Commission (FNJPC) submitted its report in November, 1999. The matter relating to judicial officers including their conditions of service is primarily the concern of the State Governments/High Courts. The Commission has sent its recommendations to the Central Government, State Governments, UT Administrations and High Courts. The recommendations are under examination in so far as they relate to the Central Government, i.e. in regard to the Union Territories only. The recommendations which relate to the State Governments are being examined by the State Governments.

The Supreme Court is also monitoring the implementation of the Report of F NJPC in W.P. No. 1022/1989- All India Judges Association *Vs.* UOI. The matter came up for hearing before the Supreme Court on 8.2.2001 and it has been adjourned to 27.3.2001.

Legislation to curb money and muscle power in elections

453. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are considering a proposal to bring forward legislation to curb money and muscle power in elections;
- (b) whether it is proposed to debar criminals from contesting elections to Parliament and State Legislatures; and
- (c) when a final decision is likely to be taken and a law in this regard enforced?

THE MINISTER OF LAW JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) In view of the growing incidence/allegations of use of money and muscle power in elections and entry of criminal elements into electoral politics, recommendations have been made from time by different bodies and individuals like the Committee on Electoral Reforms (Dinesh Goswami Committee), the Committee on State Funding of Elections (Indrajit Gupta Committee), the Law Commission of India (170th Report on Reform of Electoral Laws), the Election Commission of India, etc. for curbing these tendencies. The reform of electoral laws is, however, a continuous and ongoing process and can be carried out only through consensus among political parties, which is a time consuming process and, therefore, no time frame can be suggested in this regard. Government, however, intends to continue interaction with the political parties in this regard.

Fast track system for disposal of court cases

454. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether his Ministry has suggested evolving a "fast track system" to reduce the backlog of cases and providing cheap and speedy justice;
- (b) if so, whether in view of mounting of arrears of over two crore cases over 24 lakh cases pending in the High Courts, it is necessary that "fast track system" in judiciary should be adopted;